

Hi Ethan:

First off, thank you for taking the time to reach out to me about the work I am doing on the Associated Students, and addressing an extremely important topic that is prevalent especially with the rhetoric that is happening across America.

Overarching Theme (tl;dr): Many candidates run campaigns about accessibility and A.S. as a whole preaches transparency and accessibility, but in the end... lack of a better term... A.S. keeps BUILDING WALLS in order to keep people out of Executive Positions on The Associated Students. I strongly believe that a person with a 2.3 and a person with a 2.5 should be allowed the opportunity to have access to a position on the Executive Branch of the A.S. A.S. is not the police of students. We need to let go of the status quo.

In my meeting this last week with former Interim VCSA Drew Calandrella asked me, "What is the status quo? How can we better?" Over the last two weeks, I have been attempting to pass a bill titled, "The A.S. Accessibility And Opportunity Act 2019." To understand the importance of this Legislation, let me give you a bit of history on this piece of Legislation.

This amendment was passed in 2009, according to research I have done from past Councils. With this being prior to the 2010 Compton Cookout (which was an incipient that shook the entire campus), you could probably imagine the campus climate of the campus of the time. Political moves to keep people out of running for A.S. were imposed in the A.S. Constitution and were passed. Fast-Forward to my first year on A.S. Council in 2014. After learning about what happened, and during that time when the Black Lives Matter movement swept across America, a couple Senators, including myself, and some AVP's sponsored a Bill that proposed to change the A.S. Constitution from:

Originally:

### **Section 2. Eligibility**

The Officers shall be members of the ASUCSD and shall not hold any other voting position on the Council. The Officers shall have no less than a 2.5 cumulative grade point average.

Proposed Change:

### **Section 2. Eligibility**

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After much debate, this ended up passing on Council Floor, but was not ratified by the College Councils. It failed with a 3/6 ratification. The same piece of legislation went up on the table again in 2016. It got the majority but not the 3/4 threshold in order for it to be ratified by the College Councils. Each time, it has been mainly College Senators putting a block on this piece of legislation. Fast-Forward to 2019. I am back on Senate after returning to UCSD. I had taken the last 3 years off to work in corporate America, becoming Founder and President of my first company, and getting real world experience before finishing school. I spent last year at another UC and University, and then returned to UC San Diego this last Fall. Upon returning to A.S. through an appointment for a position that I did not even apply for (\*\*first red flag\*\*) I read many of the candidate statements from the prior election, in order to see whom I would be working with. I learned that many had run unopposed, but many campaigned for more accessibility and transparency with A.S. In order to keep that theme, I decided,

being the new Senator with probably the most institutional knowledge, to do a full audit of the Associated Students which brought me to rewriting our Standing Rules and re-evaluating the relevancy of our Constitution. Going through 140 pages of the ASUCSD Standing Rules and The ASUCSD Constitution, I came across many discrepancies, and began to propose changes.

### **Why I proposed this bill?**

Coming from years of debates over this specific issue, I knew the arguments for and against. This year, I decided to propose, instead of a 2.0, a 2.25 as a compromise between a 2.0 and a 2.5. Here are my reasons to propose:

#### **1. What qualifies an individual to be the best leader?**

I am a firm believer in that a number completely takes the intersectionality out of a person. I have spent 2.5 years at UCSD from 2013-2016 and again in 2018. I have worked with many student leaders from across the campus, from various organizations, to working with Angel Investors, and C-Level Corporates in a San Francisco, CA. I believe that their GPA is NOT an indicator on how well someone can lead an organization. It is also no secret that many CEOs and leaders across the nation did not finish college, or had different avenues to reach their success. I think it is wrong for A.S. to limit those who individually believe they have the leadership qualities in order to run an organization.

#### **2. Discrepancies when Looking at other prestigious Universities.**

After knowing the dark past of this line in the Constitution, the argument since 2009 has transformed into 2015 was that since we are UCSD we pride ourselves in academia, and so therefore we should keep our high academic standards. But when you look at other places that are either at our academic achievement level or higher, you learn that academia is not the reason for keeping that barrier.

First example, UC Berkeley. Cal does not even have a GPA requirement in their Constitution. It just states:

### **SECTION 2: MEMBERSHIP**

- A. All regularly enrolled and degree-seeking students at the University of California, Berkeley in the fall or spring semester who have paid the mandatory supporting fees, and who so voluntarily choose, shall be members of this Association.
- B. Eligibility for membership in the Association shall begin when a person enrolls as a student for the fall or spring semester, but no earlier than the first day of the semester. Enrollment status shall be determined by the University Registrar.
- C. Upon becoming a regular member of the Association, a person shall continue to be a regular member until they resign membership, graduate, cancel university enrollment, withdraw from the university, are suspended or expelled from the university, or fail to become an enrolled student by the first day of a subsequent Fall or Spring semester.
- D. The Bylaws may provide for classes of associate and honorary membership and the procedures for assuming or losing such membership. Associate and honorary members shall not have the right to vote in Association elections, count towards the number of members required to petition the Association for matters established in the Constitution, sign petitions established in this Constitution, or to hold office in positions reserved for members.

### SECTION 3: POSITIONS

- A. In order to assume or remain in any position in the Association, a person must be a member of the Association or be enrolled as a student during the spring or fall semester at the University of California, Berkeley Extension predominantly taking classes offered through the Concurrent Enrollment Program, Fall Program for Freshmen, or any functionally similar programs offered in the future, unless the position is explicitly designated as non-student eligible.
- B. A person may remain in office during an inter-semester break if they were eligible to hold office on the last day of instruction of the immediately preceding semester.
- C. A person may assume office during an inter-semester break or run or apply for office at any time if they can demonstrate that they had been eligible to hold office at some point in the past twelve months and can become eligible to hold office by the first day of instruction of their term.
- D. The Judicial Council shall allow a person holding a position in the Association to continue holding that office, for no longer than one consecutive semester, if they cease to be eligible to hold office for the following reasons:
  - a. The individual is taking a leave of absence from the University for a parental, medical, family, or other reason recognized by the Bylaws which does not otherwise prevent the individual from fully executing their position in the Association with reasonable accommodation.
  - b. The individual is working towards the removal of a university-imposed impediment to their degree and is continuing to attend classes.
- E. A person may be determined ineligible to hold office pursuant to this section solely by the Judicial Council.

So as long as you are a registered student, taking classes, ASUC believes that you are capable enough to try and be a leader of campus.

Next example, UCLA. UCLA has their GPA requirement at a 2.0, along with a registered student and taking classes.

#### 5.1 Candidate Elections

- 1. Definition:  
A candidate election is a process in which a vote is held to choose among candidates to fill (an) office(s).
- 2. Eligibility for Candidacy
  - a. General Requirements
    - i. For the purpose of this Election Code, the term "candidate" shall be defined as any member of the Undergraduate Students Association who is eligible for candidacy if they meet the following requirements at the petition filing deadline:
      - 1. Is currently registered.
      - 2. Is currently enrolled in at least 4 units.
      - 3. Has at least a 2.0 cumulative grade point average.
      - 4. Is not subject to any administrative disciplinary sanctions, the terms of which would preclude participation in University activities.

Final example, UCSB which is a little lower in ranking than UCSD. They have a GPA requirement at a 2.0 and if you drop below that, you can appeal to the J-Board for they understand extenuating circumstances.

- 3) In order to be eligible to run for office, transfer students must have been enrolled at the UCSB campus for a minimum of two (2) academic quarters prior to the Spring election in which they wish to participate, and must have completed at least twenty-four (24) academic units at the UCSB campus.

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- 4) During the Spring quarter of the election and their term of office, the Executive Officers shall be required to complete at least six (6) units per quarter (excluding summer) and maintain at least a two point zero (2.0) overall grade point average.

So when looking at these comparisons with other UC's it was more concrete the rumors I have heard, that UCSD is institutionalizing the oppression of marginalized communities and the ASUCSD is doing nothing to help undo that.

### 3. Past Candidates have had to drop out or cannot run... were they not qualified?

I have served over my time at UCSD on three very different A.S. Councils / Senates, with the 2018-19 class being my fourth Senate. I have run and been involved with 3 very hectic election campaigns. Over my time, I have watched many candidates not even be able to begin or drop out because of this issue. In 2015, a friend of mine who was a Campus-Wide Senator wanted to run for Exec. She had received the most amount of votes out of all the Campus-Wide Senators in 2014. That was when there were 8 Campus-Wide Senators and 19 of us ran against each other for 8 spots. She could not run in 2015 for an Exec position at the time because she had a 2.4 GPA. I have seen other VPCA candidates in the following years having to withdraw midway from the elections because of their GPA being at a 2.3 or 2.2, and I knew that they were the best for that position. On the personal side, I dropped out of the presidential election race in 2015 because my GPA was at a 2.3. Since then I have run various companies and teams of people, and my GPA was not a factor in how well one can lead. When it came to seeing who was not allowed to run, I began to notice a trend that many of these individuals were from marginalized communities and so I began the research.

### 3. Shutting Out Marginalized Communities and Transfers.

President Gomez made the comment during one of the debates last week that we should not correlate lower GPA's with marginalized communities. I am sad to say, she did not do her research for the statistics and numbers are against her statement. I spoke with current VCSA Alysson Satterlund and my own Warren Provost Emily Roxworthy about this topic before I presented the legislation. When looking at the numbers when it came to graduation classes, more students on average who represented marginalized communities made up more of the population of students who had a GPA

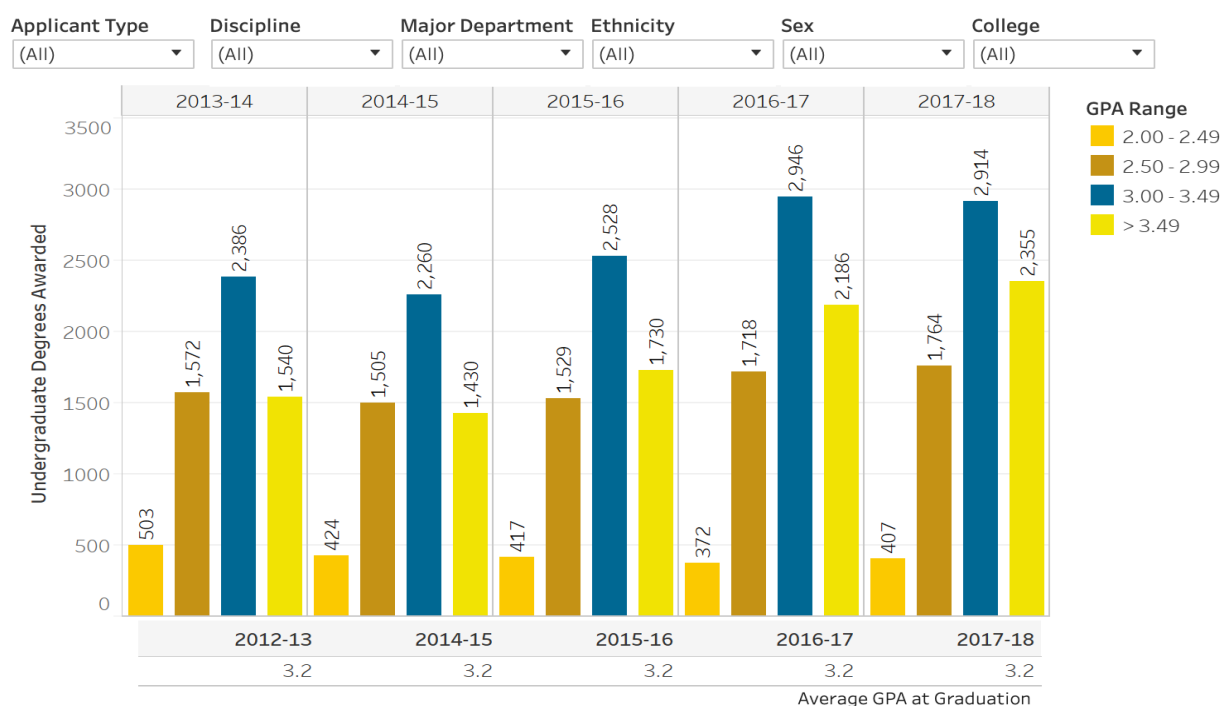
between 2.0-2.49. The data does not take into consideration the fluctuations between your years as well because we all know some quarters we do better than others. For example you could spend most of your undergraduate career at a 2.3 but then your last quarters take the easiest classes possible, and that would boost your GPA to get you into the next bracket. Hypothetically speaking, this rule in The Constitution potentially shuts out over 8000 students from A.S. Exec. For if you take the total sum of the people within a 2.0-2.99 and multiply by 4 classes. That is more people that actually vote in the A.S. Elections. You can say that taking the two columns is not fair but I would say the same thing. A student with a 2.6 GPA or a 2.3 GPA or even a 2.2 GPA should be allowed to run for an Exec position.

## Student Statistics and Data

Degrees	Time-to-degree	GPA
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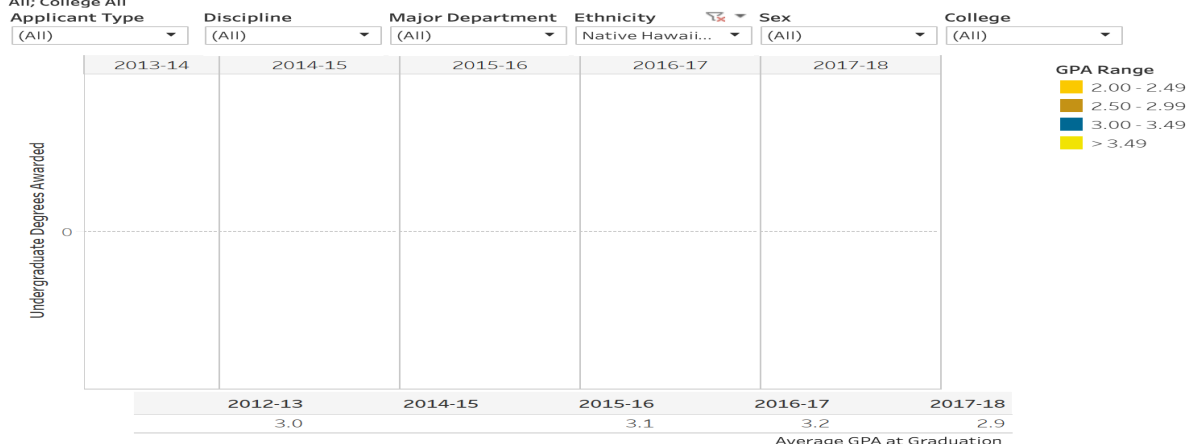
### GPA/GPA Ranges at Graduation by Applicant Type, Discipline, Major Department, Ethnicity, Sex & College

Filter selections: Applicant Type All; Discipline All; Major Dept. All; Ethnicity All; Sex All; College All



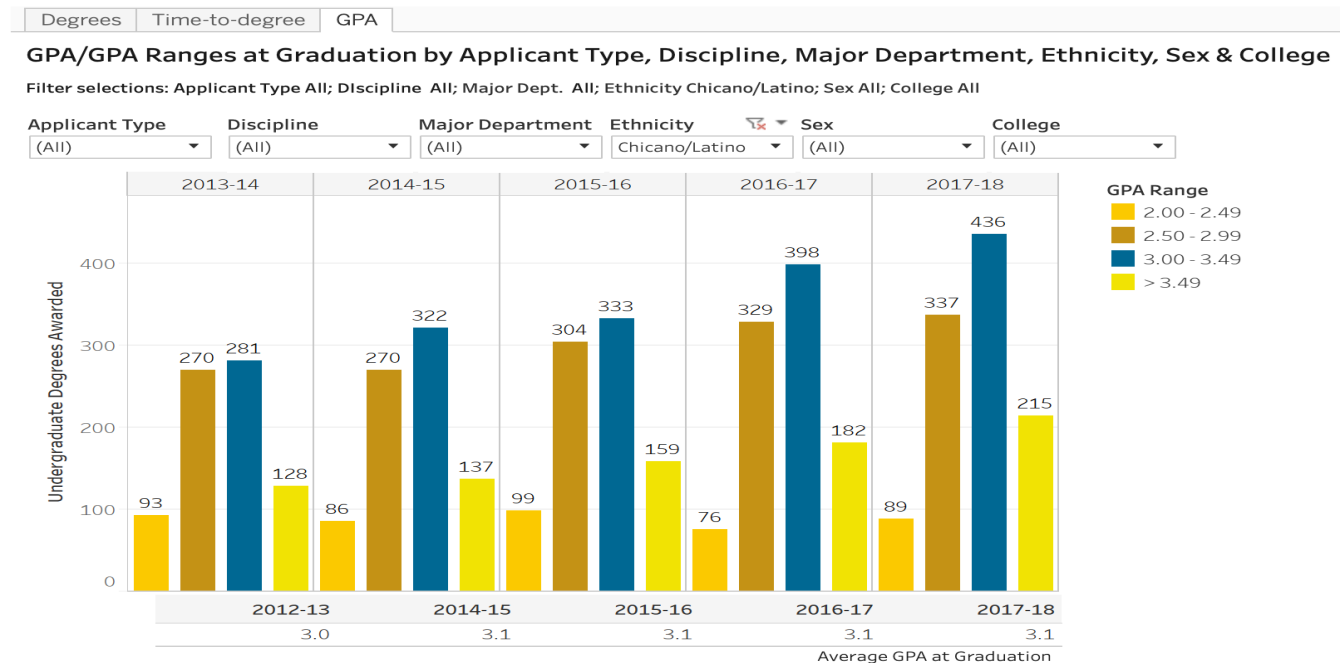
### GPA/GPA Ranges at Graduation by Applicant Type, Discipline, Major Department, Ethnicity, Sex & College

Filter selections: Applicant Type All; Discipline All; Major Dept. All; Ethnicity Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander; Sex All; College All

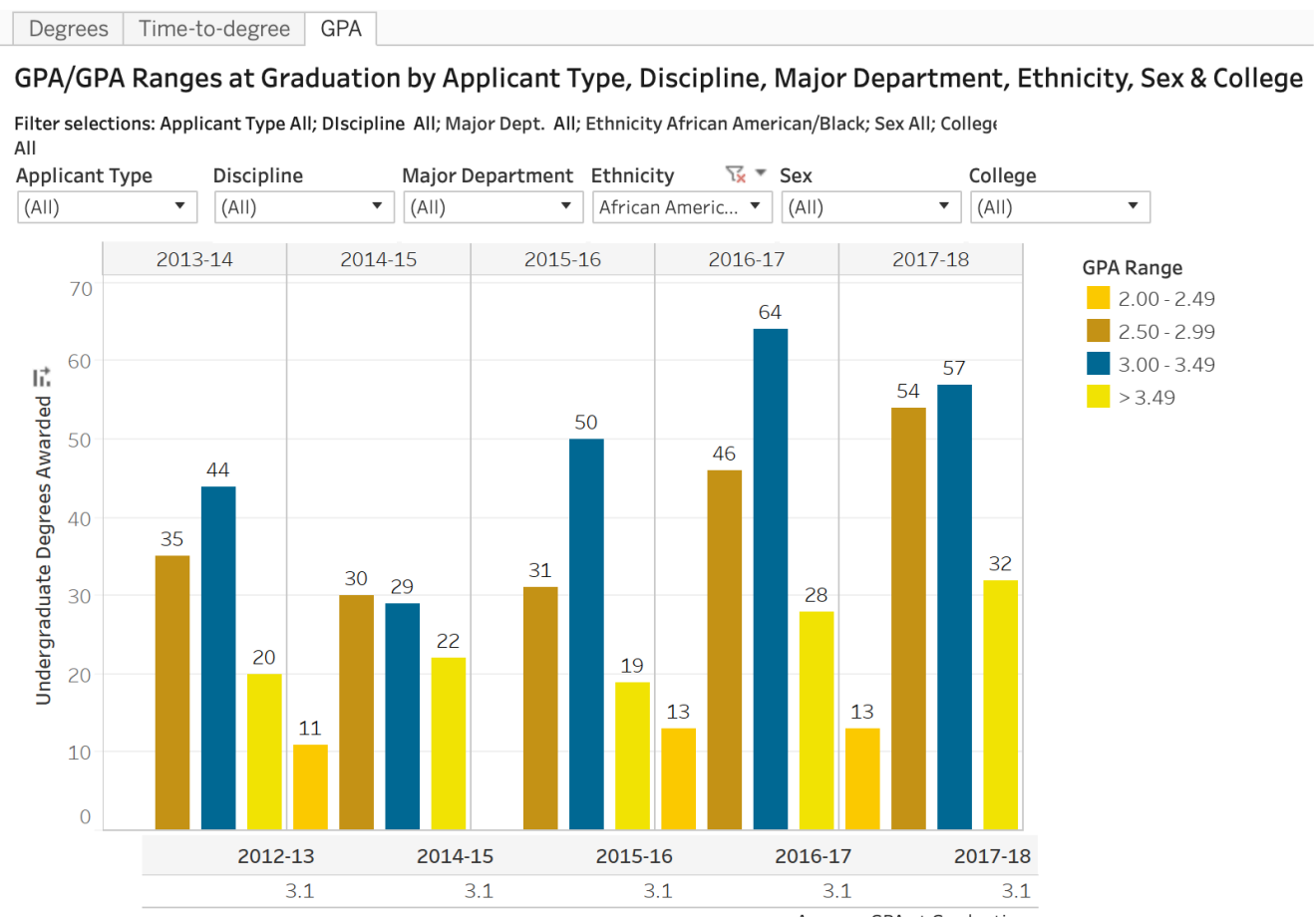


The average for Pacific Islander was a 2.9

# Student Statistics and Data



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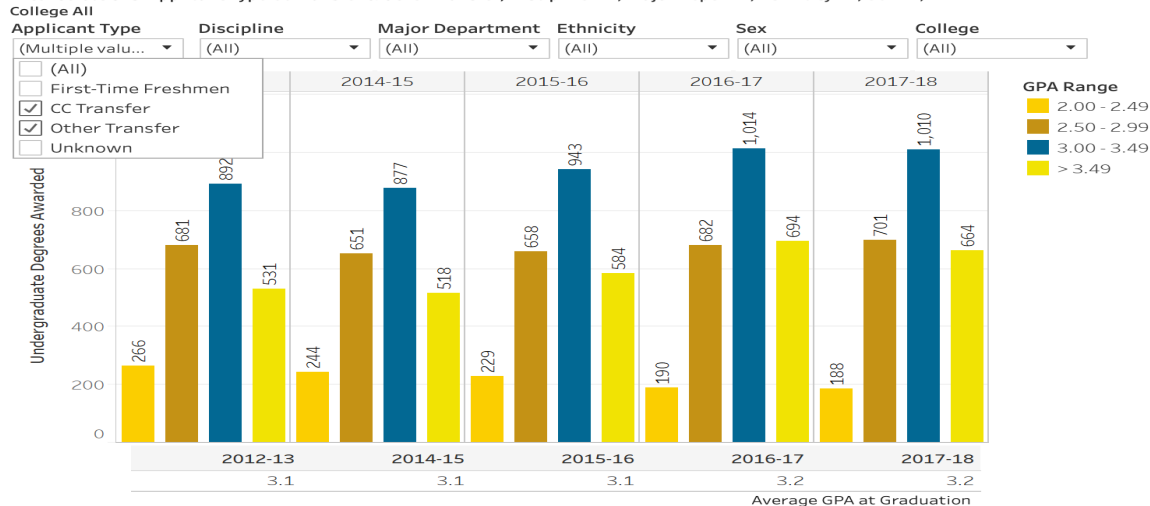


Transfers are at a disadvantage as well because, your first 60-100 credits GPA are not taken into consideration when you transfer to UCSD. When you transfer to UCSD, you pretty much start over.

This is not the case at other campuses because I went to a different UC, and a CSU last year, and I had different GPA's at both universities. This again shows that the most people affected by this line in the Constitution are those underrepresented marginalized groups on campus.

**GPA/GPA Ranges at Graduation by Applicant Type, Discipline, Major Department, Ethnicity, Sex & College**

Filter selections: Applicant Type CC Transfer & Other Transfer; Discipline All; Major Dept. All; Ethnicity All; Sex All; College All



4. Studies show that peoples GPA's have proven to get better when they are involved.

One of my friends that I ran for A.S. with who became a Senator would always tell me that when she finally got out of her dorm room and got involved on campus, her GPA got better. Studies have shown exactly that. Senator Milledge presented to me an article backing that up. (I have attached the article to the email). I do not believe that A.S. should be the police on who can get involved and who cannot. We do not know everyone's story and being a center for open mindedness and creation of ideas, I am again firmly against actively shutting people out.

5. UCSD is about experiences, these are the things students remember

Throughout my time at UCSD, I have met and maintained friends with many alumni throughout the years. I have hired many UCSD alumni for my companies, and have worked with them constantly. We do not have the same sense of pride as they do at Cal or UCLA, but what we do have here are experiences. Years from now, even two years from now, no one will talk about the grade they got in a class, or what they got on tests. They remember the people, the experiences, the chances they got to change the world or the community they were in. A.S. should not be the dictator to take those experiences away from anyone. A person with a 2.4 GPA should have accessibility to the same experiences as a person with a 2.5 GPA.

6. Most of the real world does not care about the GPA

Coming from Corporate America these last 3 year, I have learned that companies do not ask for your GPA. Of course, even higher education and big firms might, but as a whole, companies are not looking at academia. You learn too, that if they are, those companies are not successful. When recruiters come, they look at an individual's soft skills, and how they interact with others or work in a team. People with 4.0 GPA's are constantly by passed because they do not know how to carry a conversation or interact with others. Many people from lower ranked schools get the jobs sometimes more often than UC graduates because they have learned the soft skills needed to get them the job. Competition is so much harder these days, and it is not about the GPA that sets one apart. They look at one's ability to talk and to communicate. They look for the ones that can learn fast, are easy to work with

and have the right attitude. Over my experiences on A.S., it taught me the soft skills which helped me later earn my first investor. I would never want to be the person to take that opportunity away from someone else to learn and refine their skills for the real world. We come to college to fully equip us to take on the world and land us a job. Our GPA is not a factor on getting a job, and so A.S. should have a GPA requirement to allow students to work for the student body.

#### 7. Is it really “Too Much Work”

What then is too much work? We could potentially say that about everything in life. But how is A.S. the deciding factor on what a student wants to do with their time. I learned through my career that the things I learned in the classroom were somewhat a waste of time. I learned all my life skills through my experiences. If an individual wants to pursue their goals, they should be allowed to. Getting a good GPA may not be someone's goals. The argument that we are students first was brought up. I would argue that life is all about being a student whether you are in the classroom or in the real world. We should never stop learning. So when a senator said we are doing students a disservice by lowering the GPA, I had to completely disagree with that statement for who are we to figure out what should be a priority in other students lives. Learning and being a student happens inside AND OUTSIDE of the classroom. If you are just learning in the classroom, you are not getting the holistic experience that UCSD promises you when you accept their admission.

#### 8. Overall, so much apathy and not enough accessibility, many ran on platforms of accessibility for marginalized communities... STOP BUILDING WALLS

There has been a trend of not trusting A.S. and this lack of accessibility is creating an elitist atmosphere surrounding the organization. As I mentioned before... What is the status quo. I believe A.S. is stuck in the status quo and what I have proposed with this bill is not the cure all, but I believe this organization needs a huge overhaul and more engagement from the student body in order to make it more relevant to students. We need to STOP BUILDING WALLS and shutting potentially 8,000 people from experiences of leadership. Thinking that since this is what was done in the past, it is ok for the present is a terrible mentality and I am scared for our future generations if us leaders think like that. I believe that there needs to be a change, and other leaders have supported that. I have been a part of the organization as an insider and outsider, and there continues to be many issues which keep students kept out of the table. Senator Milledge has asked me to attach a statement from him that digs into this issue further. I am disappointed on how Council handled this issue, and shutting down the conversation so that they could go home was disgusting to me.

#### **What I hoped it would accomplish if it had passed?**

Mainly, if it would have passed, I would have hoped that it would bring more accessibility to all students. I would have hope to see the trend of apathy slowly disappear and get more students engaged in the conversation. Looking at the other UC's I've been to, who do not have such a high GPA requirement, their student government is relevant and actually creating positive productive changes to their campuses. They are held to a standard of leadership which is respected and taken seriously. I believe that ASUCSD can achieve that one day, and this could have been a step in that direction. I know it is not the cure all but every year, when I keep hearing candidates preach about accessibility, and do nothing about it, I and I know other students do as well, get more and more jaded which leads to more and more apathy. Even when I was giving Senate, statistic after static of research, they knew they did not want to hear it, and a Call to Question was called. It was very disappointing.



In closing, I will continue my work, auditing the Associated Students, and there are so many issues that need addressing. It will be a tough fight because A.S. is so entrenched in its way. A.S. of 2017 spent an entire year attempting to re-write the ASUCSD standing rules, and did not pass any new legislation or changes. In one weekend I was able to do what they tried to do for an entire year, and took on the project of rewriting them so they actually make sense which would hopefully encourage more engagement from the student body. I have taken on as my mission to align and create a set of standing rules that make sense and provide a voice for every student, every year. I know that no organization is perfect, but we owe it to the student body to be accountable in our actions and provide more opportunities to succeed. We need to let go of the status quo.

I hope you get a better understanding, and have enough information to write a thorough piece about this issue. Please let me know if you have further questions or comments. I have also included Senator Milledge's statement which he asked me to include as well. Also, I have attached a PDF transcript of this email as well for I know it was a lot of information. Thanks again for your time.

Best,  
Senator Joey Giltner